
**Children & Family Services
Committee**

HB 3064

Brief Description: Concerning eligibility for services to children and pregnant women.

Sponsors: Representatives Bailey, Morrell, Dunn, Kilmer, Strow, Green, Skinner, Hinkle, Kretz, Orcutt, Anderson, Darneille, Rodne, Woods, Talcott, Santos and McCune.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Excludes the military basic allowance for housing from the definition of income when determining eligibility for maternity support services to children and pregnant women.

Hearing Date: 1/30/06

Staff: Sydney Forrester (786-7120).

Background:

Eligibility for Maternity Support Services

Maternity support services offer low-income mothers counseling and education regarding breast feeding, nutrition, and prenatal, postpartum, and newborn development. Many services are delivered through a public health nurse home-visiting model and are provided through social service agencies and community action agencies.

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) adopts rules for determining what resources are counted as income for purpose of eligibility for medical programs for children and pregnant women. Under those rules, money received from other agencies that is provided for reasons other than on-going living expenses is not counted as income. On-going living expenses include expenses for shelter, such as housing allowances.

Military Basic Allowance for Housing

Persons who serve in the military may receive a military basic allowance for housing (BAH) when government housing is not provided. The allowance was instituted following the privatization of military housing and is intended to assist members of the military who do not live in government housing with obtaining commercial housing. The BAH, like the various other military allowances provided for specific needs, is not taxable. Under federal law, the BAH also can not be counted when determining a family's eligibility for free and reduced priced meals for school children.

Summary of Bill:

The DSHS may not count the military BAH as income when determining eligibility for maternity support services to children and pregnant women.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect immediately.